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18 DEC 1959

Memorandum
MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

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ATTENTION OF : [REDACTED]
SUBJECT : CIA Estimate of the Population of China
REFERENCE : [REDACTED] 23 November 1959

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1. We do not know why the population data for year-end 1957-58 which Chandrasekhar cites in his book China's Population (Hong Kong, 1959) differ from the population level implied in his articles in the Far Eastern Economic Review (vol. XXVI, no. 23, 4 June 59 and no. 24, 11 June 59). Except for these figures for 1957-58, there are no data in the book which are not available in other published sources.

2. Although Chandrasekhar does not explicitly state that the figures for 1957-58 were given to him by the State Statistical Bureau, we believe that to be the source of the figures because they are consistent with other recent figures emanating from China.

3. The figure given by Chandrasekhar for year-end 1957 agrees approximately with the following recent statements:

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- a. [REDACTED] was given by the State Statistical Bureau a year-end 1957 figure of 672 million for the world Chinese population (including Formosa and overseas Chinese). He assumed that this meant a mainland population of about 650 million [Population, vol. 13, no. 4, Oct-Nov 58].
- b. The 1958 statistical yearbook of the USSR gives a figure of 670 million for the world Chinese population as of 1957 [Tsentralnoye statisticheskoye upravleniye SSSR, Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1958 godu, statisticheskiy yezhegodnik (National Economy of the U.S.S.R., Statistical Yearbook), State Statistical Publishing House, Moscow, 1959, p. 924].
- c. The figure of 650 million has been used by prominent Chinese officials in numerous public statements.

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